

Urban Design Objectives and Policies



Green Bay
Smart Growth 2022

Urban Design Plan

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Urban Design Plan

Relationship to the Issues and the Concept Plan

Introduction

The Green Bay Urban Design Plan is intended to guide public and private investments to create a more attractive community. The goal, objectives and policies of this chapter direct the City in terms of its ordinances, capital budget expenditures and public infrastructure design, especially in regard to streets and parks. Private actions are directed through the City's review of development applications and amendments to the City's zoning ordinance.

Urban design is both a professional discipline and an orientation or attitude towards the urban environment. As such, it touches almost every aspect of the physical form of a city, from land use to housing to transportation, parks and open space. Therefore, many aspects of the Urban Design Plan refer to, or are referenced in, other topical chapters of the comprehensive plan, especially under the topics of Land Use, Neighborhoods and Districts, and Parks and Open Space. The primary focus of this chapter, unlike the topical chapters, is on the characteristics that make Green Bay unique (like its waterfronts) or that cut across many parts of the City.

The intent of the Urban Design Plan is to create a community of distinctive neighborhoods that are supported by green public lands and vital civic and commercial centers. The recommendations direct Green Bay to take better advantage of its major natural attributes such as the Fox River, Baird Creek and the bay. New neighborhoods should be designed with some of the valued characteristics of the City's traditional neighborhoods. Parks and greenways should be designed and connected to help build lasting neighborhood value. Downtown should become more urban, dense, walkable and linked to the rivers.

Summary of Issues

The major urban design issues are summarized as:

Special Places: How should the major distinctive elements of Green Bay be accentuated to create a more attractive and interesting community? Some of those places include the bayfront, the Fox River, the creeks, Lambeau Field and the Downtown.

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New Residential Neighborhoods: Should new residential neighborhoods be designed more like the older neighborhoods with sidewalks, street trees and garages set further from the street than the front of the house? Should residential streets be built more narrow than presently?

Established Neighborhoods: How can infill development and redevelopment be guided to contribute to the appearance of the older neighborhoods? Should Green Bay become more urban, dense and mixed in certain locations so as to build on that desirable characteristic, which most other Fox Valley communities cannot supply?

Major Road Corridors: What should be done to make the major road corridors in Green Bay more attractive?

Parks and Greenways: How should parks and greenways be sited and connected to build lasting value in residential neighborhoods, the Downtown and elsewhere?

Riverfront: What should be done to make use of the river for transportation while improving public access and introducing land uses that take advantage of its aesthetic qualities?

Historic Buildings and Districts: What should be done to protect the quality of the City's several historic districts and historically or architecturally significant buildings?

Guidance from the Concept Plan

The Concept Plan for *Smart Growth 2022* provides this direction to the Urban Design Plan:

Appearances: A major emphasis should be placed on improving the appearance of buildings and streetscapes by applying design standards and guidelines. The City should improve streetscapes by providing attractive amenities and removal of extraneous signage and utility structures. New subdivisions and rebuilt streets should include buried utilities, sidewalks, bike paths and street trees. Auto-oriented commercial development should be designed to be more attractive through site planning, landscaping and sign design.

Pedestrian-Oriented Design: There should be a strong pedestrian emphasis in both neighborhoods and commercial districts. Neighborhood design should incorporate sidewalks, street trees, narrower local (minor) residential streets, modest front setbacks, interconnected streets, nearby shops and convenient access to transit.

Downtown: Downtown Green Bay should continue to be the priority focus of revitalization efforts with an emphasis on historic preservation and context-sensitive design.

Riverfront: Riverfront land use should focus on river-dependent industries, parks, housing and offices. The working river and international port are vital to the local and regional economy and must be maintained.

Parks: Use parks to make neighborhoods more attractive and sustainable. Create an interconnected citywide system of parks, greenways and parkways for recreation, beauty, quality of life and environmental protection.

Urban Character: Increase density and the mixture of land uses in selected appropriate locations.

Plan Overview

Goal: To improve the aesthetics and enhance the identity of the city as a whole and its constituent neighborhoods, major road corridors, waterfronts, and other elements, by building on its inherent strengths, including its traditional urban character, natural amenities and history.

Summary of Objectives

Objective 1 – Overall Urban Character. Design Green Bay to incorporate the best aspects of both a small town and a major city.

Objective 2 – Regional Environment. Use public improvements, public art and land development regulations to preserve, highlight and interpret the major elements and special places that evoke the regional environmental and cultural history of Green Bay.

Objective 3 – Gateways, Entries and Views. Announce entrances to the City of Green Bay with gateway features; protect and provide access to particularly scenic or significant views of the City, river or bayfront.

Objective 4 – Neighborhood Identity. Accentuate the sense that Green Bay is composed of identifiable districts and neighborhoods.

Objective 5 – Mixed Use. Encourage a mix of compatible land uses in a variety of locations and scales in order to create more vital and walkable activity centers.

Objective 6 – Better Site Design. Integrate diverse land uses and transportation modes through improved standards for site planning and design, including standards for building and parking placement, pedestrian connections, signage and landscape improvements.

Objective 7 – A Pedestrian-Friendly Street Network. Design local streets to form or extend an interconnected system that emphasizes pedestrian and bicycle access and creates pleasant and comfortable outdoor spaces.

Objective 8 – Major Road Corridors. Improve the appearance of the major roadway corridors in Green Bay through access management, site planning and sign controls.

Objective 9 – Parkways. Build an interconnected parkway system to help improve community appearances, property values and quality of life.

Objective 10 – Downtown. Support the City's economic and social goals for downtown as expressed in the *Downtown Design Plan* and *Smart Growth 2022*.

Objective 11 – Parks. Build parks and interconnected greenways to enhance the quality of residential neighborhoods and commercial districts, reflect Green Bay's cultural heritage and honor civic life.

Objective 12 – Connections to Riverfront. Improve the visual quality and connections to the Fox Riverfront to support appropriate development and enhance the community's quality of life.

Objectives and Policies

This major section of the Urban Design Plan describes what the City would like to accomplish and the policies that the City will use to achieve these objectives.

Objective 1 – Overall Urban Character

Design Green Bay to incorporate the best aspects of both a small town and a major city.

Recommended Policies:

- 1. Nodes of Urbanity in a Small Town:** Protect and improve the quiet, leafy and familial character of most residential neighborhoods while accentuating the sense of urban diversity and intensity in certain other districts and corridors. Become more urban in some locations, and use that sense of urbanity as a marketing tool for long-term growth and stability for Green Bay.
- 2. Downtown and the River:** Promote awareness of the Downtown and the Fox River as the most interesting and special aspects of the city.
- 3. Greening the City:** Create a network of interconnected greenways, parks, plazas, promenades, parkways and other tree-lined streets to beautify the community, provide recreation, enhance quality of life, boost property values and balance the effects of urban density.
- 4. Major Road Corridors:** Improve the appearance of the major road corridors that cross the city by requiring better private landscaping, installing better public landscaping, reducing the size and number of signs, locating some parking lots beside or behind buildings, and educating developers on the fine points of

site planning and building design.

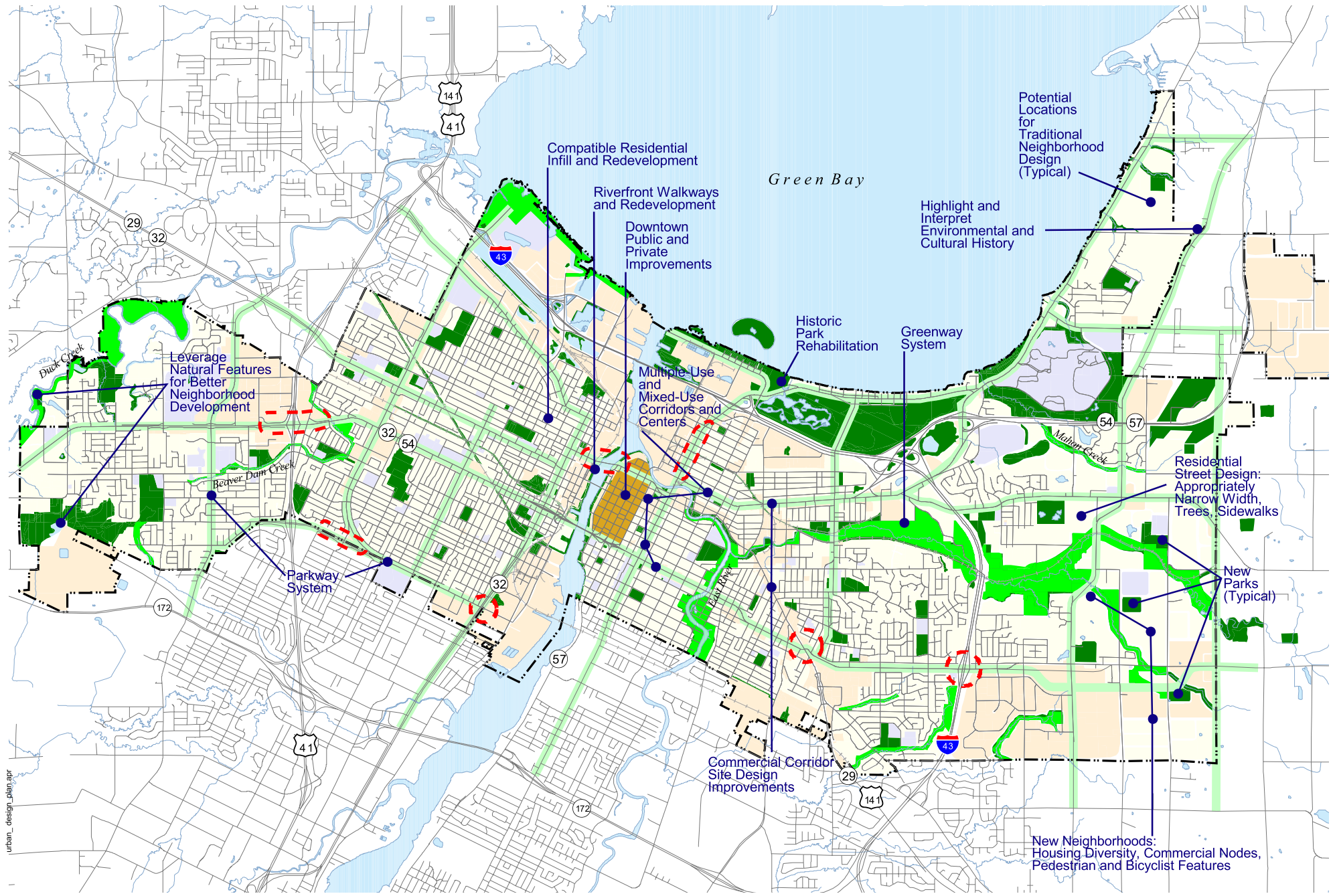
- 5. De-emphasize the Automobile:** Accommodate the automobile but do not allow it to dictate all aspects of urban design. Give high priority to the pedestrian and pedestrian-oriented development.
- 6. Urban versus Rural Distinctions:** Preserve and accentuate the difference between the urban landscape and the rural landscape by persuading neighboring rural towns to follow the guidance of the Land Use Plan chapter, which urges keeping housing density in the rural areas extremely low.

Objective 2 – Regional Setting

Use public improvements, public art and land development regulations to preserve, highlight and interpret the major elements and special places that evoke the regional environmental and cultural history of Green Bay.

Recommended Policies:

- 1. Paper Milling and Great Lakes Shipping Economies:** In addition to protecting and promoting the paper and shipping economies through the policies listed in the Economic Development chapter, help residents and visitors understand the importance of these activities through signs, interpretive monuments and views to the plants.

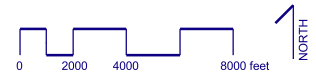


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- Parkway System
- Greenway System
- Park System
- Gateway Design Treatment
- Residential Development
- Commercial or Industrial Development
- Schools or Other Public Development

**Figure 21-1
Major Features of the Urban Design Plan**



- 2. Early Ethnic and Religious Heritage:** Interpret and highlight the early ethnic and religious heritage of Green Bay with signs, interpretive monuments, use of historic place names and the creation of appropriate parks or plazas, along with the policies of the Historic Preservation Plan.
- 3. Special Places:** Protect, interpret and enhance the qualities of the City's "special places" that offer distinct and valued experiences. (Special places include not only well-known landmarks such as Lambeau Field but also many that may be known only to residents, such as the Niagara Escarpment). Some present opportunities for continued development; others for conservation. A preliminary list includes:
- The bayfront, especially areas adjacent to Bay Beach Park and Wildlife Sanctuary and other areas open to the public;
 - The Fox Riverfront
 - The East River and Baird Creek, both designated for expansion of the greenway system
 - Lambeau Field, currently undergoing major improvements
 - Historic residential districts such as the Astor and Oakland-Dousman districts
 - Historic business districts, such as the Broadway districts, becoming a model for other revitalization efforts
 - The Niagara Escarpment, an important geologic and scenic feature likely to experience continued development pressure.

Objective 3 – Gateways, Entries and Views

Announce entrances to the City of Green Bay with gateway features; protect and provide access to particularly scenic or significant views of the City, river or bayfront.

Recommended Policies:

- 1. Community Entrance Corridors:** Major entries into the City should be designed with attractive gateway features, including ground or monument signs, public art, and suitable landscaping. Opportunities for major gateway enhancements exist at I-41 and Lombardi (route to Lambeau field), at I-43 and Mason (east side), and along the elevated section of I-43 overlooking the City and bayfront. Many potential locations for minor gateway features also exist, as shown on Figure 21-1.
- 2. Views and Landmarks:** Preserve and enhance important views and landmarks in order to maintain visual character and reinforce civic identity. Locations offering views of the riverfront, the bayfront, or of the City as a whole, should be designed for public use, where feasible, with interpretive signs, on-street or off-street parking or pedestrian access, and suitable landscaping. Citizen input will help to determine which views and landmarks are valued by the public and help guide strategies for preservation or enhancement.
- 3. Wayfinding Sign System:** Extend the existing City and County wayfinding sign system to advertise and make more visible Green Bay's major facilities and attractions.

Objective 4 – Neighborhood Identity

Accentuate the sense that Green Bay is composed of identifiable districts and neighborhoods.

Recommended Policies:

1. Neighborhood Design: Policies for the design of both new and existing neighborhoods are detailed in the Neighborhoods and Districts Plan. They can be summarized in the context of the Urban Design Plan according to the following principles:

- **Traditional Neighborhood Design:** The most desirable aspects of the City’s traditional neighborhoods should be carried forward and adapted to the design of new neighborhoods. These include relatively narrow lots (deeper than they are wide) and front yard setbacks, sidewalks, street trees and recessed garages (garages set back further than the principal façade). These are also the characteristics common to **pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods**, in which compact development patterns and interconnected streets encourage walking and bicycling.
- **Context-Sensitive Design:** Encourage infill development in older traditional neighborhoods that respects the characteristics of those neighborhoods, as described above under “Traditional Neighborhood Design” and in keeping with the prevalent housing styles in each neighborhood. This principle does not imply that all housing should be of the same type (i.e., detached or duplex) but that older and newer housing should share many design elements.

2. Neighborhood and District Identity: Work to establish and reinforce the identity of the City’s neighborhoods and specialized districts (primarily the commercial districts such as Downtown, Broadway and Olde Main) through the following techniques:

- Fostering and supporting neighborhood organizations and events;
- Placement of parks, schools and other civic buildings in prominent locations within or adjacent to neighborhoods;
- Gateway signs and other entry features; banners and distinctive streetscape design in commercial districts.

Objective 5 – Mixed-Use Development

Encourage a mix of compatible land uses in a variety of locations and scales in order to create more vital and walkable activity centers.

Recommended Policies:

1. Neighborhood Center Scale: At neighborhood “nodes” or centers within existing neighborhoods, encourage compatible mixed uses that combine small-scale retail, services, offices, housing and civic uses within single buildings and in separate buildings in close proximity. Mixed use reduces transportation time and costs, and enhances the economic viability of neighborhood-serving commercial uses.

Design standards and guidelines can be used to ensure compatibility between diverse land uses and create a pedestrian-oriented environment. These include:

- Placement of buildings and building entrances close to the sidewalk to enhance visibility and pedestrian access;
- Parking lots to the side and rear of buildings, not in front;
- Screening of parking lots from the street;

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- A high degree of storefront transparency to provide both natural surveillance and visual interest;
- Building architecture that respects the neighborhood context, with building heights and massing that are compatible with adjacent residential areas;
- Pedestrian-scale lighting;
- Other streetscape elements such as street trees, benches and kiosks that help create a distinct identity for the neighborhood center.

In neighborhood commercial nodes it is also important to limit the size of individual retail or office uses, to ensure that businesses are designed to serve their immediate surroundings, rather than a regional market.

- 2. Commercial District Scale:** In the larger commercial districts such as Broadway and Old Main, encourage mixed uses that combine a variety of compatible housing types with existing commercial and office uses. Addition of upper-story residential units, nearby townhouses, and other types of attached or senior housing can bring more people into these districts, enhancing their economic viability and urban vitality. The design principles listed above are equally applicable in these districts, although the size of individual business may be larger – a “medium” rather than “big-box” level of retail.

In the City’s newer commercial districts, most of them located along commercial corridors, mixed use development may also be a viable strategy, but generally requires larger-scale redevelopment. Many Upper Midwest communities with similar commercial “strips” are exploring similar strategies for redevelopment, including the use of “liner” buildings oriented to the street along the edges of parking lots, reorientation of buildings to new internal streets, and introduction of higher-density housing in conjunction with public open space. As the size of these sites and their exposure to regional traffic increases, the size of individual businesses or buildings may also increase.

- 3. Downtown Scale:** Downtown should contain a complete mix of uses, including offices, retail and services, government, arts, entertainment, housing, parks, trails, and visitor attractions. To strengthen the downtown’s position as the center of both the City and the region, it should increasingly be a place that people can live, work, shop and enjoy cultural and recreational opportunities. The policies and recommendations of the Downtown Design Plan generally encourage this evolution. The City will develop zoning regulations and design guidelines that ensure that each new building (including parking structures) enhances the public realm and the totality of the downtown district.
- 4. New Neighborhoods and Centers:** The principles for new neighborhood design as outlined in the Neighborhoods and Districts Plan call for a pattern of compact mixed use activity centers within walking distance of residential neighborhoods, linked by interconnected streets and punctuated by parks and prominent civic buildings.



Mixed Use: Encourage mixed use at a variety of locations and scales, from large new developments to existing neighborhood commercial nodes. Design standards and guidelines can be used to ensure compatibility between diverse land uses and create a pedestrian-oriented environment.

Objective 6 – Site Design

Integrate diverse land uses and transportation modes through improved standards for site planning and design, including standards for building and parking placement, pedestrian connections, signage and landscape improvements.

Recommended Policies:

- 1. Connections:** Maximize visual and physical linkages between adjoining land uses that are similar or can coexist compatibly, such as offices and retail or high-density housing. Encourage pedestrian movement between adjacent sites rather than multiple trips by car. Where uses are less compatible (such as industrial and residential uses), provide adequate landscape buffers and screens to soften the transition between them.
- 2. Efficiency:** Encourage sites to share functional site design elements such as shared access, shared parking, coordinated landscaping, linked open space, and surface water detention areas, when such elements support a more efficient and attractive development pattern.
- 3. Environmental Protection:** Require protection of natural features such as trees, slopes, streams, and wetlands in new developments.
- 4. Open Space:** Preserve open space in new developments through the use of conservation subdivisions, planned unit developments, transfer of development rights between landowners, conservation easements, and other techniques.
- 5. Sensitivity to Context:** Design new development to respect surrounding development, whether this includes quiet low-density residential neighborhoods, traditional storefronts, or major institutions such as the hospitals. New development should emulate the desirable qualities of traditional urban settings, while protecting the integrity of existing neighborhoods.
- 6. Parking Design and Landscaping:** Locate parking lots behind or to the side of buildings or in block interiors wherever possible in order to reduce the visual impact of surface parking. Landscape and screen all parking lots and parking structures in order to improve their appearance from surrounding streets and properties.
- 7. Transit-Oriented Design:** Ensure that new developments along transportation corridors support existing or potential transit service by placing building entrances close to the street and making provisions for location of bus stops or shelters in convenient and visible locations.
- 8. Coordinated Signage:** Develop standards for coordination of multiple signs on a development site to ensure compatibility of size, colors, graphics and materials. Develop standards for public signs and banners identifying commercial corridors, similar to the wayfinding sign system already in place in the downtown.
- 9. Incentives:** Encourage innovative development and redevelopment through the use of incentives and appropriate regulations, to achieve desired residential and nonresidential development patterns that are also environmentally responsible. Provide incentives for developments that protect natural areas or environmentally sensitive areas through land trusts, open space zoning or other techniques such as density bonuses for open space development.



Better Site Design: Attention to elements such as parking design, landscaping, pedestrian connections, and relationship to the street can contribute to a more pleasing and functional environment for any type of development.

Objective 7 – A Pedestrian-Friendly Street Network

Design streets to form or extend an interconnected system that emphasizes pedestrian and bicycle access and creates pleasant and comfortable outdoor spaces.

The street system is a fundamental element of the neighborhood design. The street pattern controls traffic flow, determines the ease of pedestrian and bicyclist movement, defines views and vistas, orients the user, unites the community, and creates a physical framework into which houses and other buildings are placed.

The function of minor residential streets should not be to move as much auto traffic as fast as possible but rather to move autos at appropriately slow speeds to and from the home while also encouraging bicycling and walking and creating an attractive forecourt for the housing.

Recommended Policies:

- 1. Interconnected Local Streets:** Local residential streets should create a totally interconnected system. All new residential subdivisions should provide public street access in each cardinal direction unless impractical because of natural, environmental or similar conditions. Local streets should be built to a relatively narrow width so as to encourage slow traffic speeds that enhance the safety and enjoyment of other users.

The characteristics of new local and collector residential streets are illustrated by the following table and sketches.

- 2. Collector Streets:** Collector streets should be planned for each future neighborhood at the “sketch plan” phase and should link

across neighborhoods to arterial roads and other collector roads. Planners should continue to work with each land developer to plan the general alignment of collector streets beyond the limits of smaller subdivisions to ensure neighborhood-wide continuity.

- 3. Arterial Streets:** Reserve a sufficiently wide public right-of-way for any additional arterial road by adopting an “official map” of the planned road system. Right-of-way width beyond what may normally be required through dedication at the time of a land subdivision should be acquired by purchase. The necessary width of the future arterial road right-of-way should be determined based upon the standards included in the *Smart Growth 2022* Transportation Plan.
- 4. Street Trees:** Trees regularly spaced along the street are a key ingredient for giving streets a residential character and making them feel more comfortable. Street trees add greenery, provide shade, give a street a lived-in feeling and contribute to neighborhood character.

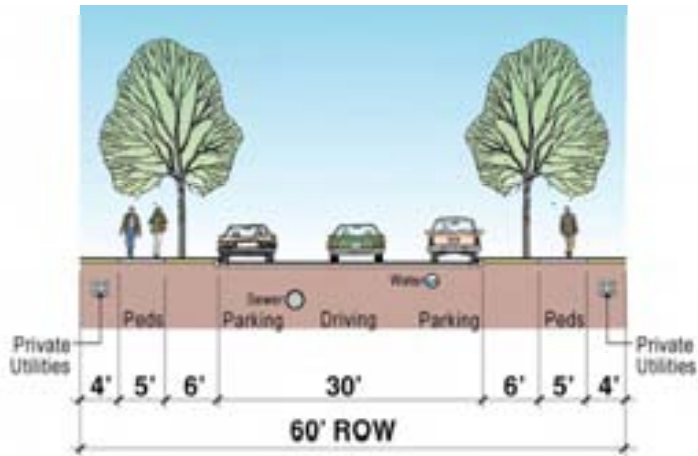
Trees should be planted in the public right-of-way along every street, including commercially-oriented arterial roads and local residential streets. Landscaping along the streets should be a joint public and private effort that could take advantage of both the public right-of-way and the private setback space.

Tree planting along residential streets should be the responsibility of the land developer, while the City will plant trees along commercial streets. The City should include the cost of supplemental tree planting in its annual capital budget.

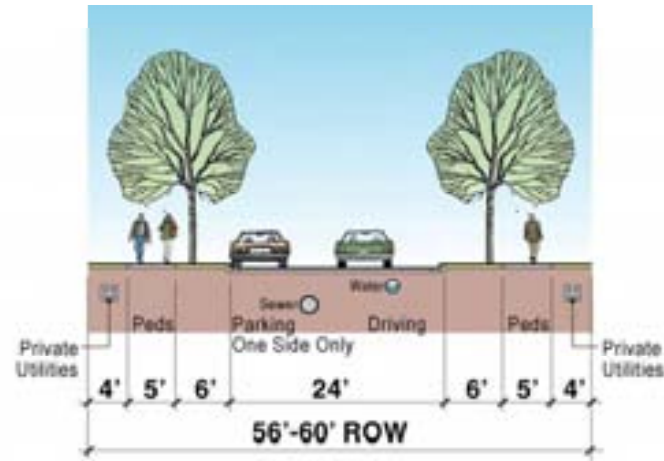
Table 21-1: Characteristics of New Residential Streets

Type of Street	Street Width *	Right-of-Way Width	Traffic Direction	Parking	Planting Strip	Sidewalk	Utilities
Loop around a green (fewer than 6 houses)	20	44	One way	One side	6 with trees	2 @ 5	Easement behind the sidewalk for electricity, telephone, cable TV. Sewer and water under the street.
Cul-de-sac (fewer than 8 houses)	24	48	Two ways	One side	6 with trees	2 @ 5	
Cul-de-sac (8 or more houses)	28	52	Two ways	Both sides	6 with trees	2 @ 5	
Local	24	48	Two ways	One side	6 with trees	2 @ 5	
Local	30	60	Two ways	Both sides	6 with trees	2 @ 5	
Collector (Minor)	32	60	Two ways	Both sides	8 with trees	2 @ 5	
Collector (Major)	36	72	Two ways	Both sides	8 with trees	2 @ 6	

* All dimensions are in feet to the back of the curb.



Recommended Local Residential Street Design with Parking on Both Sides



Recommended Local Residential Street Design with Parking on One Side

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Tree species should not be randomly mixed even though that would be the safest approach for preventing tree disease epidemics. Rather, the same species should be used for several blocks in sequence (such as from one collector street to the next) in order to establish a definite image for each street. Using a variety of trees also protects against massive tree loss through disease. The Green Bay Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department should publish an list of acceptable species from which land developers may choose.

5. **Sidewalks:** Sidewalks are an essential element for circulation and they provide opportunities for socializing, playing and exploring a neighborhood on foot. As discussed in the *Smart Growth 2022* Transportation Plan (under Pedestrian System), sidewalks or pedestrian trail connections should be provided along all new public streets or as internal trail systems within subdivisions (connecting to public sidewalks). Collector and arterial streets should have sidewalks on both sides. The minimum sidewalk width should be five feet so that two adults may walk comfortably side-by-side. Sidewalks should be set at least six feet behind the curb (except in the downtown and other locations where buildings abut the sidewalk) to provide space for street trees and snow storage.
6. **Traffic Calming:** Traffic calming techniques should be used to discourage cut-through traffic, especially commercial traffic, and/or to slow traffic speeds. A list and description of these techniques is presented in the *Smart Growth 2022* Transportation Plan.

The most practical of these is the appropriately narrow street width presented in the previous table but others may be used when conditions warrant based on the review and advice of a traffic engineer. It should be kept in mind, however, that when traffic is constrained along one route it tends to flow to another nearby route, possibly creating unintended effects. These

techniques are particularly useful in older neighborhoods that have higher densities and a greater mixture of housing types and land uses. The Traffic Engineering Division of the Green Bay Public Works Department must be involved in any street design modifications. Alterations should be undertaken on a comprehensive, neighborhood-wide basis.

7. **Street Lighting:** Residential streetlights add character and contribute to a safer environment in residential neighborhoods. Develop a street lighting program for the residential neighborhoods. Establish lighting standards (application, spacing, configuration) for various residential street categories. Select a pedestrian-scaled light fixture as the standard for all residential neighborhoods in the City. Identify the responsible agency and the funding source(s) for installing and maintaining the pedestrian-scaled street lights. Placement of decorative lights in front yards may also be considered as an alternative where organized as a comprehensive neighborhood program.

The keys to successful residential street lighting programs are to make sure that the streetlights have a residential character and adequate illumination. A convenient and low cost solution may be to install tall fixtures (25- to 30-foot mounting height) at street intersections or mid-block. Although these fixtures usually provide adequate illumination, they may be out of scale with the residential areas and do not contribute to the character of the residential neighborhoods. Pedestrian-scaled (12- to 16-foot mounting height), ornamental (lantern or other special design theme) light fixtures, at more frequent spacing intervals (such as every 100 to 200 feet), will be much more pedestrian friendly and more effective in contributing to the character and image of residential neighborhoods.



Local Residential Street Design: Appropriately narrow local residential streets can encourage slow traffic speeds that enhance the safety and enjoyment of other users. Street widths of 24 to 30 feet may be appropriate, depending on location of parking.

Some variety among light fixtures is desirable as a way to identify neighborhoods and districts. However, cost and maintenance considerations call for a single basic residential light fixture, perhaps combined with one or more distinctive fixtures for commercial districts. It is preferable to select fixtures that can be supplied by several manufacturers to ensure a steady supply and competitive prices.

One method for providing some variety and emphasis would be to establish a hierarchy of streets and to vary the spacing and the configuration (single, twin, or quad heads) of the light fixtures according to the significance of each street.

- 8. Bicyclist and Pedestrian Systems:** Every residential neighborhood should accommodate bicycling and walking and be connected to the rest of the city via bicycle lanes or paths and sidewalks. Pedestrian and bicyclist networks should be comprehensively planned for each neighborhood to ensure coordination and continuity among individual subdivisions, commercial sites, parks, schools and greenways.

Every local residential street should accommodate bicycling by virtue of its traffic-calming characteristics and connections with many other roads. On-street lanes and off-street paths should link neighborhoods to one another and overcome obstacles such as major roads, streams and railroad tracks. The greenway system should be used in conjunction with on-street lanes (both new and retrofitted) to provide a network that is continuous and relatively safe.

Every local residential street should also accommodate walking via sidewalks or trails connecting to other streets. The sidewalk network should connect to the greenway trails and also link to commercial areas, parks and schools.

Objective 8 – Major Road Corridors

This section of the Green Bay Urban Design Plan addresses:

- General corridor issues
- Roadway corridors
- Developed residential corridors
- Commercial corridors

Each of these types of corridor carries large volumes of traffic but each is in a different setting and, therefore, must respond to different conditions.

Improve the appearance of the major roadway corridors in Green Bay through access management, site planning and sign controls.

Recommended Policies:

- 1. Control Off-Premises Advertising:** Off-premise advertising (commonly known as billboard signs) can be a major community image issue. While some billboards can be reasonably attractive, they essentially represent visual pollution and can have a severe negative impact on a community's visual environment. However, billboards are also a means of local businesses advertising and property owner income. While it may be preferable to eliminate billboards as a visual blight, most communities focus on controlling their numbers. A 1987 zoning ordinance amendment placed a cap on new billboards in Green Bay, with the goal of relocating billboards from downtown to major highway corridors, and this strategy has had some success.

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation has a program to install clusters of small signs near highway exits and



Major Road Corridors: Whether commercial or residential, such roads can be made more visually appealing through planted medians or buffer strips, trails and streetscape improvements.

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intersections announcing businesses that serve travelers. This reduces the need for private billboards for those businesses.

- 2. Relocate Utility Lines:** Overhead utility lines are one of the major visual impacts in some of the arterial road corridors, such as Mason Street and Military Road. Tall, wooden poles and the large number and complex pattern of lines create a congested and unsightly visual environment, and result in heavy, unsightly pruning of street trees. The poles occupy valuable space in already-constricted rights-of-way, and in some cases are dangerously close to the traffic lanes.

The City will consider relocating utility lines underground or to less visible corridors when engaging in streetscape improvements, road widening and/or area revitalization projects.

Ideally, all overhead utility lines should be relocated underground, or, if that is not feasible, relocated to a less visible corridor. However, some overhead utilities, such as high-voltage lines, may be too expensive or impractical to locate underground. In that case, solutions should be explored to minimize the visual impact of the lines by designing special, less obtrusive utility poles and by combining as many of the lines in as few locations as possible.

Utility boxes can also be obtrusive, unattractive elements in new neighborhoods. The City will encourage their location in less visible locations through the site plan review process.

- 3. Corridor Lighting:** Uniformly light all major roadway corridors throughout the length of each corridor. Require that all new developments and roadways to have uniform lighting levels.

Inconsistent corridor lighting detracts from the visual appearance of corridors and can be dangerous to drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians. Ideally, all major roadway corridors should be uniformly lighted throughout the length of each corridor. Also, a

standard, basic light fixture should be used in consistent application patterns to provide general lighting for roadways.

Limited-Access Roadway Corridor Policies

This category refers to roadways, such as I-43 or US 41, which have a very wide right-of-way and limited or no access to adjoining properties. These corridors are designed for through trips and to carry large volumes of traffic. Many of these roadway corridors lack landscaping, which negatively affects the community's appearance. Their appearance can be improved by increasing variety and color of landscaping materials, highlighting natural features, and reducing monotony and breaking sight lines.

- 4. Landscaping and Theme Treatments:** Evaluate and identify opportunity areas along the roadway corridors where trees (especially) or shrubs could be introduced. Work with the Wisconsin Transportation Department and Brown County to accomplish roadway landscaping.

Planting clusters of trees and shrubs can be a very cost-effective way to create feature areas and introduce variety into these corridors. Larger clusters of evergreens or groupings of deciduous trees with a base of evergreen shrubs will add color and changing vistas.

Special theme treatments in the open roadway corridors could be developed at bridges, fences or screen walls. Bridge structures, bridge railings, and lighting on bridges all present opportunities for introducing special or unique design treatments. A special uniform design treatment could be developed for all open roadway corridors, or special themes could be developed for each corridor.

- 5. Other Visual Improvements:** Develop prototypical design treatments for open roadway corridor bridge, fence, and screen wall treatments. As opportunities arise, when bridges are reconstructed or the roadways rebuilt, introduce the special theme treatments.

Developed Residential Corridor Policies

This category refers to major roads that abut housing, such as portions of Mason, Dousman or 9th Streets. These corridors are different from the open roadway corridors in that they are much more densely developed and have a more urban appearance.

In situations where housing abuts high volume roads (either facing or backing up to the road), landscaping can mitigate the effect of the traffic on the housing. Such screening could consist of earth berms or of screen walls. Landscaping treatments should be used for the berms and the screen walls, and the screen walls should be designed to complement the adjoining residential developments.

Continuous landscaping treatments in the residential road corridors would provide a prime opportunity to enhance and green the city. Since there is no need to maintain views of businesses, as there is in commercial corridors, extensive use of shrubbery and/or closely spaced canopy street trees could be used to enhance these corridors.

- 6. Public Improvements:** Include extra landscaping and berming along residential areas when installing public landscaping along major roads or when building new arterial roads.
- 7. Private Improvements:** Require that new residential developments include sufficient plantings and/or berming along major roadways to screen housing from the effects of traffic.

- 8. Roadway Widening:** When widening a roadway, consider removing all of the development on one side of the road or the other to create more space for roadway landscaping, lighting and sidewalks as well as to provide space for a landscaped buffer for the remaining housing on both sides of the road.

- 9. Landscaping Enhancements:** The Green Bay Department of Parks, Recreation and Forestry will prepare a general inventory of the tree pattern along Green Bay's major residential streets and a city-wide landscaping improvement plan. That plan should include guidelines for species, spacing, placement, responsibilities and maintenance. As opportunities arise, particularly revitalization projects or road widenings, improve the landscaping along those roads. The City may also add trees independent of other roadway improvements.

Commercial Corridor Policies

Major roadways such as Mason, University or Main Street, which serve many businesses, present the greatest challenge in terms of community image. They are very intensely developed and also contain some of the least attractive visual environments in the City. Major issues are the constrained rights-of-way conditions, large expanses of pavement, overhead utility lines, proliferation of public and private signs and billboards, and lack of landscaping treatments and streetscape amenities.

The following policies could help to dramatically improve the image and appearance of the commercial corridors.

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10. Access Points: Multiple direct access points in the commercial corridors create a sense of clutter, require more pavement and reduce the opportunities for landscaping. Although it may not always be feasible to totally remove some of the access points, there may be opportunities to reduce or combine multiple access points to a single property or to adjoining properties.

During site plan review, limit the number of access points allowed along commercial roads corridors, and consolidate existing access points wherever possible. Identify prototypical options for removing or consolidating access points. Require that access points be limited in all new major commercial roadway corridors.

11. Commercial Site Landscaping: One of the more noticeable negative feature in the commercial corridors is the lack of screening for many large parking lots, which results in a continuous, uninterrupted expanse of pavement between building lines on opposite sides of the road. A low landscaped screen, up to three feet tall, along the right-of-way line or at the edge of parking lots would dramatically improve the visual character of the corridors by adding greenery to the streetscapes and by breaking up the large expanses of pavement.

Additional parking lot landscaping would also help to break up large expanses of pavement and identify pedestrian walkway areas. The City will upgrade its site plan review standards to require both types of landscaping in commercial developments.

12. Roadway Theme Treatments: To enhance their identity and to provide visual variety, special theme treatments could be developed for portions of several major commercial roadway corridors. These designs could be installed through the parkway program and could consist of unique landscaping treatments, distinct light fixtures or custom banners or signs.

The City should identify roadway corridors for special theme treatments in conjunction with the parkways system, and prepare a special theme treatment design for each along with an implementation program.

13. Improve Quality and Lessen Number of Signs: Most of the commercial corridors contain a wild profusion of commercial and public signs juxtaposed in various combinations. Having so many signs shout so many messages results in visual overload that reduces their effectiveness and contributes to the visual pollution of the corridors.

The City's sign regulations for commercial corridors should be revised to simplify, coordinate and limit the number of signs. Guidelines need to be developed for limiting the messages on each sign, restricting the number and size of signs permitted, and combining multiple signs into fewer coordinated sign panels.

Objective 9 – Parkways

Green Bay has an opportunity to begin to create a citywide network of highly attractive streets that will bring value and enjoyment to the community for centuries. Because the street system is the spine of the city and the most visible of public expenditures, the parkway system proposed here can have a major visual and economic effect. There is much potential for improvement in the appearance of Green Bay's arterial and collector street system because that aspect of the major streets has been neglected in the past.

The purposes and benefits of the parkway system are to:

- Improve the overall appearance, identity and quality of life of the community
- Increase and sustain property values
- Create bicyclist and pedestrian links among the neighborhoods, districts, greenways and parks
- Create visual community entry statements
- Provide a ceremonial approach to important locations such as downtown or Lambeau Field
- Calm traffic speeds in residential neighborhoods.
- Promote annexation of land by demonstrating the City's commitment to investing in high quality public facilities.

Build an interconnected parkway system to help improve community appearances, property values and quality of life.

Recommended Policies:

- 1. Parkway System Plan:** As presented in the *Parks, Greenways and Parkway System Plan*, the City of Green Bay will create a system of parkways, as illustrated by Figure 20-1. Parkway are intended to be arterial or collector roads that are highly landscaped and include sidewalks, on-road lanes or off-road paths for bicycling, and decorative lighting. Adjacent

private landscaping should generally be improved (as recommended elsewhere in this plan) and coordinated with the public landscaping.

Parkways will vary in their design across the City, since some will be built in newly-developing areas where adequate rights-of-way can be obtained, while others will be constructed in more constrained locations (see Figure 20-3, Parkway Design Concepts). Traffic capacity and posted speeds may also vary according to the function of each parkway in the road network. In general, however, the parkway system will be designed to the highest quality in landscaping, signage, lighting, linear public open space and pedestrian or bicyclist transportation. The parkways will connect parks, greenways and major civic districts (such as Downtown) to the greatest extent possible. The relationship between the each parkway and nearby existing or future land development will always be a primary concern.

Objective 10 – Downtown

Downtown is the economic, civic and visual heart of Green Bay and, consequently, deserves a high level of design attention. The City and the Downtown stakeholders understand this and have made significant investments in buildings, streetscape, the riverfront and planning. The *Downtown Design Plan* (1997) recommended principles and projects for public and private improvements for the Downtown, which includes the Broadway corridor on the west side of the Fox River. Those ideas are summarized below.

The central concepts of the *Downtown Design Plan* were to create a constellation of “urban villages” that are pedestrian friendly, include a variety of activities in mixed-use buildings, and open the riverfront to the Downtown and the neighborhoods. Some of the policies and actions listed below have been accomplished as of 2002.

Support the City’s economic and social goals for downtown as expressed in *the Downtown Design Plan* and *Smart Growth 2022*.

Recommended Policies:

- 1. Villages and Districts.** Shape Downtown in urban villages and districts, including Town Square Village, Entertainment Village and Broadway Village, and the Convention District and the Central Activity Core Support District.
- 2. Town Square Village:** Create a “heart” for the Downtown with these features:
 - Town Center Park
 - Washington Commons (formerly Port Plaza Mall)
Repositioning and Redesign
 - Mixed-use development

- 3. Entertainment Village:** Create a ‘round-the-clock activity place that complements the Town Square Village by providing opportunities for business, leisure and community activities composed of:
 - A signature office complex at Walnut and Washington Streets
 - Fox Theatre renovation
 - Mixed-use commercial infill
 - Mixed-use parking ramp
 - Open-air market and marina at the existing bus garage
 - Cultural heritage center south of Mason Street on the river
- 4. Broadway Village:** Provide opportunities for business ventures to operate in a distinctive environment and take advantage of opportunities provided by the character of the Broadway Corridor and the Fox River, including these elements:
 - Mixed-use infill and pedestrian-oriented development
 - Mixed-use infill automobile-oriented development
 - Fox River and Great Lakes Park north of Dousman Street
 - Neville Museum (reevaluate based on structural conditions of present building)
 - Marina and mixed-use complex north of Mason Street
 - Mixed-use redevelopment south of Walnut Street
- 5. Convention Center District:** Create a highly identifiable and viable convention center complex that serves the intrastate and interregional conference and meeting markets, including:
Convention center expansion
 - East River Park extension
 - Convention marina
 - A landmark tower
 - Hotel expansion
 - A new hotel
 - A mixed-use parking ramp

- 6. Downtown Wayfinding and Gateways:** Create a system of consistent wayfinding and gateways signs around the city and the Downtown to help people find their way to Downtown, experience a sense of arrival, find their way to key sites Downtown and build Downtown identity.
- 7. Fox Riverwalk:** Complete a system of pedestrian esplanades, plazas and walks on both sides of the river with links to the Downtown, the neighborhoods and the East River park system.
- 8. Parking:** Improve the appearance of the edges of surface parking lots with landscaping, decorative fences and low masonry walls. Make parking structures an attractive element of the Downtown by including shops and offices on their first floor, locating them behind multi-story buildings, and treating their facades more carefully.
- 9. Streetscape Improvements:** Adopt a multi-level system of trees, lights, banners, sidewalk treatments and furniture pieces that can be applied along various streets. Improve streetscapes differently depending on where they are in this hierarchy: commercial boulevard, boulevard, central activity core, Broadway, neighborhood industrial and regional connector.
- 10. Bridges:** Use special lighting to reinforce the linkage of areas east and west of the Fox River and to add to the visual appeal of the rivers. (This action has been accomplished)
- 11. Downtown Design Guidelines:** Follow the guidelines of the Downtown Design Plan in the Villages and Districts, which address streetscape, buildings, signs, materials, color and other elements.

Objective 11 – Parks

Parks are a source of outdoor recreation as well as beauty. They soften the feel of urban development, add greenery to neighborhoods and protect some environmental features. Properly planned and designed, parks can and should be the visual focus of a neighborhood or commercial district while greenways can connect parts of the city. Like streets and parkways, parks and greenways are major determinants of the appearance of a community and can contribute mightily to its quality of life, while also enhancing property values. Therefore, it is appropriate to address parks as an element of urban design in Green Bay. Parks should be viewed as one element of a larger system of civic spaces that are interconnected and complementary.

Build parks and interconnected greenways to enhance the quality of residential neighborhoods and commercial districts, reflect Green Bay's cultural heritage and honor civic life.

The policies that realize this objective are included in the Parks, Greenways and Parkway System Plan.

Objective 12 – Fox Riverfront

Most of Green Bay turns its back on the river – there are few places from which to view the river, and few places to walk or drive along the riverfront. Streets are placed parallel to the river with buildings fronting the street, thereby placing their rear facades to the river. Cross street connections do not go through to the river's edge. Much of the existing industrial development (coal piles, storage, parking) is not the best use of the riverfront. However, the new Fox River trail, improved bridge lighting, and other actions are underway to open up views and improve access to the river.

Proposed riverfront connections, trails, and parks are described in the 1997 *Downtown Design Plan* and the *Waterfront Plan*. Specific redevelopment recommendations are included in the Land Use Plan and further discussion of park and trail connections are found in the Parks, Parkways and Greenways System Plan.

Improve the visual quality and connections to the Fox Riverfront to support appropriate development and enhance the community's quality of life.

Recommended Policies:

- 1. Downtown Design Plan.** The City will continue to follow the precepts of the *Downtown Design Plan*, especially as they address the Fox Riverfront.
- 2. Public Open Space and Walkways:** The City will continue to create a system of linear public open space with walkways along both sides of the Fox River except where industry and shipping make it impractical and unsafe.

3. Relationships of Buildings to the Open Space Edge:

Private buildings along the riverfront linear parks should provide windows, doors, landscaping, high quality materials, and possibly outdoor private spaces such as dining to complement the public space.

- 4. Edge Treatments:** “Green” alternatives to rip-rap or sheetpile shoreline stabilization are recommended, including plantings with fast-growing streambank vegetation in more protected locations (see the Natural Resources Plan).

Implementation Program

The following table lists the major actions that should be taken to implement the urban design features of *Smart Growth 2022*, designates their priority and indicates which departments or agencies should be involved.

Table 21-2: Implementation Program for the Urban Design Plan

Priority	Action	Lead and Coordinating Agencies
1	Zoning Ordinances: Amend the Green Bay zoning ordinance to create new mixed-use districts, create a traditional neighborhood development district, improve regulations for site plans, landscaping and signs, and reduce incompatible land use relationships.	Planning Department. Public Works Department Law Department Green Bay Historic Preservation Commission.
1	Subdivision Ordinance: Amend the Green Bay subdivision ordinance to allow new local residential streets in single-family housing subdivisions to be built to a narrower width than presently. Also require that such streets include trees in the public right-of-way and sidewalks on both sides of the street.	Planning Department Public Works Department
1	Site Plan and Subdivision Review: Apply the guidelines of this chapter and the regulations of a new zoning ordinance when reviewing applications for commercial, industrial or multiple-family housing site plans and when reviewing applications for land subdivision.	Planning Department Public Works Department.

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Priority	Action	Lead and Coordinating Agencies
2	Parkways and Greenways: Begin the multi-year process of building the system of parkway roads and continue the process of extending and improving the system of linear public open space known as greenways.	Public Works Department Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department
3	Park System: Continue to improve Green Bay's strong park system by adding more neighborhood parks and athletic fields as indicated in the Parks, Greenways and Parkways System Plan.	Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department Planning Department, Public Works Department
3	Trails: Extend the City's trail system by adding new segments as indicated by the Parks, Greenways and Parkways System Plan.	Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department Planning Department, Public Works Department
3	Streetscape Improvements: Improve the appearance of the street system, including local and arterial streets, through the addition of trees, decorative light fixtures, banners, "wayfinding" signs, entrance monuments, and neighborhood identification signs.	Public Works Department Planning Department
3	Infill Development, Redevelopment and Rehabilitation: Ensure that new development in established areas is designed sensitively to its context by applying the provisions of the rewritten zoning ordinance, the power of the City's financial assistance to redevelopment, and the City's historic preservation regulations.	Planning Department Economic Development Department